

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KUWAIT 01059 01 OF 02 241143Z
ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-14 PM-03 SP-02 INR-05 MC-01 EUR-08
L-01 /042 W

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P 240952Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7364

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KUWAIT 1059

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

LIMDIS

FOR NEA ASST SEC ATHERTON FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, KU

SUBJZKT: GOK PURCHASE OF M113A1 SERIES VEHICLES

REF: (A) KUWAIT 0218, (:B) SECDEF 3395 DTG 272306Z JAN 77,
(C) SECDEF 5815 080059Z FEB 77.

1. AS A FOLLOW-UP TO OUR RECENT CONVERSATION IN RIYADH ABOUT THE POSSIBLE COMMERCIAL SALE OF 161 ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS (APCS) TO KUWAIT BY THE FMC CORPORATION, I SHOULD LIKE TO EXPLAIN IN MORE DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM INVOLVED IN PROVIDING THE STANDARD WEAPON EQUIPMENT FOR THESE VEHICLES. AS YOU MAY RECALL, THE EMBASSY DECIDED TO PURSUE THE COMMERCIAL ROUTE IN ORDER TO MEET THE GOK REQUEST FOR THE SALE OF APCS (SERIES M11/-1) AFTER DOD (ISA/DSAA) INDICATED I COULD NOT PROVIDE THE TOTAL NUMBER REQUESTED BEFORE 1979. FMC, WHICH MANUFACTURES THIS APC MODEL, HAD INDICATED IT COULD MAKE 25 APCS AVAILABLE 5 MONTHS AFTER PLACEMENT OF THE ORDER, I.E. PRESUMABLY IN 1977, AND THE REMAINDER BY THE MIDDLE OF 1978, WHICH MORE CLOSELY
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 KUWAIT 01059 01 OF 02 241143Z

CONFORMED TO THE GOK'S DELIVERY DESIRES. WHILE I WAS IN WASHINGTON ON CONSULTATION AT THE END OF NOVEMBER 1976, I DISCUSSZB THIS QUESTION WITH GEN FISH, DSAA DIRECTOR, WHO INDICATED THAT DOD WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO THIS PROCEDURE AND INDICATED THAT IT WOULD SEEK TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE IN PROVIDING ANY TRAINING NECESSARY BEYOND THAT WHICH FMC HAD SAID IT COULD PROVIDE. NEITHER IN THIS

DISCUSSION NOR IN MY SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS WITH FMC REPRESENTATIVES WAS THERE ANY SUGGESTION THAT DIFFICULTIES WERE ENVISAGED IN PROVIDING THE WEAPONS USUALLY MOUNTED ON THESE VEHICLES.

2. ON THE BASIS OF THESE DISCUSSIONS AND AN INDICATION BY THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE SHAIKH SA'AD OF WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER A COMMERCIAL SALE, THE EMBASSY INVITED FMC TO PRESENT ITS PROPOSITION TO THE GOK. REF A REPORTS THE RESULTS OF THE INITIAL NEGOTIATIONS WHICH LOOKED PROMISING, BUT WHICH REVEALED FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT FMC WAS NOT IN THE POSITION TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED WEAPONRY AND AMMUNITION, ETC. (AS DETAILED IN REF A). WE THEREFORE REQUESTED DOD TO PROVIDE THOSE ITEMS, BOTH THOSE REQUIRED FOR THE INITIAL DELIVERY OF THE APCS AND THE REMAINDER NEEDED TO COMPLETE THE FINAL DELIVERY OF THE ORDER.

3. THE RESPONSE FROM DOD TO THE INITIAL REQUEST WAS VERY HELPFUL (REF B), BUT THE REPLY ON THE REMAINDER WAS NOT FORTHCOMING IN THE LEAST (REF C). IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE NUMBERS OF THE ITEMS REQUESTED WAS SMALL AND THE ITEMS THEMSELVES -- 50 CAL. MACHINE GUNS (99), 81 MM MORTARS (12), AND TOWS 214)- LAUNCHER, TUBULAR GM220A1 -- ARE COMMON STANDARD US MILITARY EQUIPMENT, IT SEEMED STRANGE THAT THEY COULD NOT BE PROVIDED MORE PROMPTLY THAN THE LEAD TIMES INDICATED; 30 MO., 27 MO. AND 21 MO. RESPECTIVELY, I.E. LATER THAN THE SCHEDULED DELIVERY DATES OF THE VEHICLES THEMSELVES.
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PAGE 03 KUWAIT 01059 01 OF 02 241143Z

RM WHEN INFORMED OF THIS SITUATION, THE FMC REP LOCATED IN ATHENS PROCEEDED TO SEE WHETHER THESE WEAPONS COULD BE ACQUIRED ELSEWHERE. HE APPARENTLY HAS LOCATED AN ARMS DEALER IN SPAIN WHO CAN PROVIDE MOST OF THE ITEMS DESIRED (EXCEPT TOWS), INCLUDING AMMUNITION, TO MEET THE REQUIRED DELIVERY DATES.

5. WHILE THIS OSTENSIBLY WOULD SOLVE THE PROBLEM IF ACCEPTABLE TO THE KUWAITIS, I AM VERY LEERY OF THE WHOLE PROPOSITION. IN THE FIRST PLACE, THE GOK HAS HERETOFORE INSISTED UPON DEALING DIRECTLY WITH THE USG AND HAS ONLY GONE COMMERCIAL AT OUR SUGGESTION. SECONDLY, THE GOK WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE USG CANNOT PROVIDE THIS SMALL NUMBER OF STANDARD ITEMS WITHOUT SUCH LONG LEAD TIMES. THIRDLY, I AM BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THAT THIS PROCEDURE IS LEGAL, NOT TO MENTION ETHICAL. FOURTHLY, IF IT IS LEGAL, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE

FOR THE USG, THROUGH ITS INSTRUMENT OF THE EMBASSY IN KUWAIT, TO BE A PARTY TO SUCH AN ARMS SALES ARRANGEMENT AT THE VERY TIME THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION IS REVIEWING ITS ARMS POLICY, LOOKING TOWARD A REDUCTION OF ARMS TRANSFERS TO THE MIDDLE EAST. WHILE THE SALE OF APCs HAS RECEIVED CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL AND DOES MEET A LEGITIMATE KUWAITI DEFENSE REQUIREMENT, THE POSSIBLE REVELATION IN THE PRESS OF USG INVOLVEMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL ARMS DEALERS WOULD REFLECT MOST UNFAVORABLY ON THE ADMINISTRATION.

6. I WOULD LIKE TO MENTION ONE OTHER POINT ABOUT WHICH I JUST LEARNED UPON MY RETURN FROM RIYADH, NAMELY, POSSIBLE GOK INTEREST IN PURCHASING APCs FROM YUGOSLAVIA AFTER A

RECENT VISIT HERE BY THE GOY MINISTER OF DEFENSE. AS YOU KNOW, WE HAVE BEEN TAKING EVERY OPPORTUNITY HERE TO STEER
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PAGE 04 KUWAIT 01059 01 OF 02 241143Z

THE GOK AWAY FROM ANY PURCHASES OF SOVIET OR EASTERN EUROPEAN ARMS. I WOULD BE VERY DISAPPOINTED INDEED IF OUR FAILURE TO PROVIDE THESE SMALL AMOUNTS OF ARMS WOULD LEAD TO GOK PURCHASES OF YUGOSLAV EQUIPMENT.

7. THEREFORE, I WOULD APPRECIATE VERY MUCH IF YOU COULD INTERCEDE WITH DOD TO SEE IF THESE WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION

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PAGE 01 KUWAIT 01059 02 OF 02 241200Z
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P 240952Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7365

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KUWAIT 01059

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FOR NEA ASST SEC ATHERTON FROM AMBASSADOR

COULD NOT BE MADE AVAILABLE IN TIME TO COINCIDE WITH THE
FMC DELIVERY DATES PROMISED FOR THE APCS. I WOULD HAVE
NO OBJECTION TO YOUR SHOWING THIS MESSAGE TO GEN
MCAULIFFE. YOU MIGHT TELL HIM THAT I AM SOMEWHAT
MYSTIFIED ABOUT THIS UNHELPFUL REACTION FROM DSAA AND
CONCERNED THAT THIS MAY STEM FROM THE FACT THAT THIS
SALE IS NOT BEING HANDLED THROUGH FMS CHANNELS, ALTHOUGH
I WAS CAREFUL TO OBTAIN GEN FISH'S CONCURRENCE BEFORE
GOING AHEAD WITH IT.
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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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